



Recycled Water

Lead Department: Water

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Background

The San Diego Water Department services 1.2 million customers, including the largest concentration of military bases in the United States. It is one of the ten largest water suppliers in the nation – providing 206 MGD per day. By the year 2030, the City's population and economic growth is projected to increase water demands by about 55 million gallons a day (MGD) or 25 percent over 2002 levels.

The City presently imports approximately 90% of its water supply from northern California and the Colorado River. Local reservoirs owned and operated by the City supply about 10 to 15 percent of need. The City's Long-Range Water Resources Plan, adopted by the San Diego City Council on December 9, 2002, calls for a flexible strategy for the next 30 years, implemented in three 10-year phases. The principal strategies are:

- Conservation
- Recycled water
- Groundwater storage and treatment
- Water transfers
- Desalination

As a coastal city, the City of San Diego is very interested in the potential new water supply opportunity that desalination technology offers. While the technology has existed for a while, only recent advances have introduced affordable pricing. While ocean desalination remains a viable opportunity for the San Diego region, the City of San Diego believes that brackish water desalination represents the best alternative locally.

The City of San Diego goal for recycled water is to increase use from 4,455 acre-feet per year in 2002 to 15,000 acre-feet per year in the year 2010. Funding for recycled water facilities is limited and Federal assistance is critical for:

- Identifying cost effective ways to reduce salinity in wastewater
- Improving public acceptance and understanding of the value and importance of maximizing the use of recycled water

- Securing funding for recycled water distribution systems (pipelines) in addition to funding available for building new recycling plants.

State Strategies

- Identify and seek Proposition 50 funding opportunities from the State Water Quality Control Board for calendar year 2004.
- Request \$5 million of Chapter 8 funds from Proposition 50 to be used as a special Revolving Loan program to provide commercial and large landscape customers (at least 20 AF/year usage) with financial assistance to retrofit their pipelines to accommodate the distribution of recycled water.

Federal Strategies

- Seek 25% Federal cost sharing from the US Bureau of Reclamation, DOI, Title 16 Program:
 - \$1.7 million-FY05
 - \$2.4 million-FY06
 - \$5.9 million-FY07
 - \$1.8 million-FY08
- Initiate/support studies to address wastewater salinity issue. San Diego County Water Authority has an element of their Phase II Recycled Water Master Planning effort that outlines a study of this issue.
- Initiate/support studies to improve public acceptance and understanding of the value and importance of maximizing the use of recycled water. The 2003 Customer Development Plan includes a strategy for customer outreach and public education. The City is initiating a 2005 Recycled Water Master Planning effort that will include public outreach and education.